



U.S. Department of Justice

Ronald C. Machen Jr.
*United States Attorney for the
District of Columbia*

*Judiciary Center
555 Fourth St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530*

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 21, 2010

For Information Contact:

Public Affairs

(202) 514-6933

http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/dc/Press_Releases/index.html

Maryland Man Found Guilty of Murdering Visitor from Alabama

WASHINGTON - A 22-year-old Maryland man, Kevin Anthony Brown, has been found guilty by a District of Columbia Superior Court jury of second degree murder while armed and associated firearms offenses for the murder of a 21-year-old Alabama man, Leonard Branham, who was in town visiting friends in the District of Columbia in April 2007, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced today.

On April 14, 2007, Leonard Branham and his friends attended a birthday party in Northeast, Washington, D.C. After the party, Mr. Branham and four others drove to Southeast, Washington, DC to drop off one of Mr. Branham's friends so that she could rendezvous with her boyfriend. On the way, two women in the vehicle started an argument over a cigarette. By all accounts, the argument was petty and fueled by alcohol. When the group arrived at their destination, the woman getting dropped off entered the nearby apartment building to see her boyfriend, John Francis. Meanwhile, Leonard Branham attempted to break up the fight between the two other women. One of the women involved in the fight felt mistreated, so she went to the apartment and requested assistance. John Francis came outside and attacked Leonard Branham. As the two men fought, John Francis' associate, Kevin Brown, came out of the apartment and fired a gun. As Leonard Branham ran away, defendant Brown fired a second shot, striking Leonard Branham in the back. Leonard Branham died a short time later.

In announcing the jury's verdict, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the work of Metropolitan Police Department Detectives Kimberly Lawrence, Harbin Combee and Antonio Duncan. He also praised the work of Mobile Crime Officer Curtis Lancaster who handled the crime scene evidence. He also expressed thanks to Marian Russell, Shannon Alexis, Thomas Royal, Paul Howell and Kimberly Smith of the U.S. Attorney's Office, who were invaluable in assisting with the investigation, exhibit preparation and other litigation support. Finally, U.S. Attorney Machen expressed special appreciation to Victim/Witness Advocate Marcy Rinker, who worked closely with the victim's family and other witnesses, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Seth Waxman and Jelahn Stewart, who tried the case to verdict.